

**THE GLOUCESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

*Our mission is for all students to be successful, engaged, lifelong learners.*

**Program Subcommittee Meeting Minutes**

Friday, November 4, 2011

Superintendent's Conference Room – District Office

9:45 a.m.

**Members Present**

Roger Garberg, Chairman

Val Gilman

Michelle Sweet

**Administration Present**

Dr. Richard Safier, Superintendent

Asst. Supt. Shayne Trubisz (10:58 arrival)

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**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Garberg called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m. and stated the mission of the Gloucester Public Schools.

**II. REPORTS/DELIBERATIONS/DISCUSSION**

**A. Strategy Development/Community Relations and Communications**

1. Further Discussion of Possible Contract with Communications/Survey Company  
Dr. Safier stated that the driving factors right now are the role that the survey company might play in the overall process of gathering information for the city and the schools, as well as the issue of funding. Mrs. Gilman would like to focus on the School Committee's obligations and recommended that if the city were to fund the survey, she would like to use K12 Insight to help solidify our decision on our commitment to neighborhood schools by focusing on our parent base. She believes that public officials also support neighborhood schools and that the more evidence we can get from the school community, the more it will help the new City Council and the mayor to support it. She would like to make a decision on Fuller School soon so as not to stall potential development and revenue.

Mrs. Sweet stated that the School Committee is elected to make decisions that are educationally best for children and that, from what she has heard, parents prefer neighborhood schools. Therefore, she does not believe that \$5,000 should be spent to get information that we already have. Mrs. Gilman indicated that we could get more data that would help us make an evidence-based decision on the future of Fuller School and that it would not require a lot of work on our part. Mrs. Sweet disagreed, stating that that decision was made four years ago when Fuller was closed in favor of neighborhood schools. Chairman Garberg said that surveying the public about the use of Fuller School asks them to do something that the School Committee has not done themselves.

Mrs. Gilman made an initial motion, seconded by Mr. Garberg, to recommend to the full School Committee that the city fund the use of K12 Insight to survey parents, guardians and staff on their support of maintaining neighborhood schools, in order for the School Committee to be in a position to make an expeditious and well-founded decision on the future use of Fuller School.

Chairman Garberg stated that Fuller might be an essential resource in the future if we are unable to sustain current programming, and he does not believe a survey would address that uncertainty. He said the survey may put a lot of pressure on the School Committee to act before they can make a fully-informed decision.

Dr. Safier indicated that he expects to provide projections on what a reconfiguration of Fuller School could achieve at the next B&F meeting.

After discussion, Mrs. Gilman amended her motion as follows:

**Amended Motion**

On a motion by Mrs. Gilman, seconded by Chairman Garberg, it was

**VOTED:** 2 in favor, 1 opposed (Mrs. Sweet) to recommend to the full School Committee to endorse the use of K12 Insight to survey parents, guardians, staff and the school community on their support of maintaining neighborhood schools, in order for the School Committee to be in a position to make an expeditious and well-founded decision on the future use of Fuller School which takes into account an informed public opinion.

*Shayne Trubisz joined the meeting at 10:58 a.m.*

2. Report of Meetings with Jesse Lieb of K12 Insight – Mrs. Gilman reported that Mayor Kirk was unable to attend the recent meeting with Jesse Lieb but that Jim Duggan attended on her behalf. There is another meeting scheduled for November 14th which the mayor will attend.

Chairman Garberg reported on his one-on-one meeting with Mr. Lieb. He noted that K12 Insight claims to be able to provide a technical infrastructure that supports public outreach, including a “Your Voice” feature for the website and how to get higher response rates. Mrs. Gilman suggested including the information provided by Mr. Lieb in the School Committee packet.

3. Discussion of Leveraging New Publicist and Arts Festival Positions – A discussion was held on the job description for publicists, which includes reporting on all activities, recognitions, and events happening in the schools. Chairman Garberg suggested that the publicists could address issues of misinformation and

misconceptions about the schools. Dr. Safier stated that the publicists may help to address the misconceptions but believes it is principally the job of the administrators and the leadership team to address those issues directly.

Dr. Trubisz recommended that principals include a paragraph or two in the school newsletters about what is happening with respect to teaching and learning.

Mrs. Gilman believes it is important for the publicists to focus on putting together a list of email addresses and maintaining and updating that list. She also believes they should be trained on sound bytes they can provide to the press for inclusion in articles.

There was a discussion about the press coverage of the play “Song of the Sea,” which did not mention the involvement of students from East Gloucester School. Chairman Garberg questioned whether it is possible to recognize our students’ participation in these types of events, while noting the parents are making private arrangements in cases like this so that the school may not know about their involvement. Mrs. Gilman suggested that parents could have a connection to the publicists to recognize what their children are doing in the community.

A discussion was held about professional development for the publicists.

Mrs. Gilman would like to make sure they know how to post things on Facebook, which needs to go through Dr. Safier. She would also like the O’Maley S.A.I.L.S. program one-minute videos posted on Youtube and to have a middle school brochure put together from Debra Lucey’s slides to be handed out at the middle school. Finally, Mrs. Gilman suggested that the principals, Dr. Trubisz and JoAnne Reiss rotate “My View” columns.

## **B. Chapter 71 Conformity Issues**

1. Report on Meeting between Dr. Safier and Dr. Goodwin Regarding Student Advisory Council – Mrs. Gilman met with Dr. Goodwin, who has chosen five people, one from each grade. She and Dr. Safier will go to their first meeting and talk about the types of issues that the School Committee wants to discuss.

## **III. ACTION – None**

## **IV. ADJOURNMENT**

On a motion by Mrs. Gilman, seconded by Mrs. Sweet, it was unanimously

**VOTED:** To adjourn the Program Subcommittee Meeting of November 4, 2011 at 11:47 a.m.